Organizational Behaviour – Perception

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Outline

- Defining Perception
- Basic elements of perception
- Principles of Perceptual Selection
- Perceptual Organization
- Social Perception
- Perceptual Biases
- Implication to HRM

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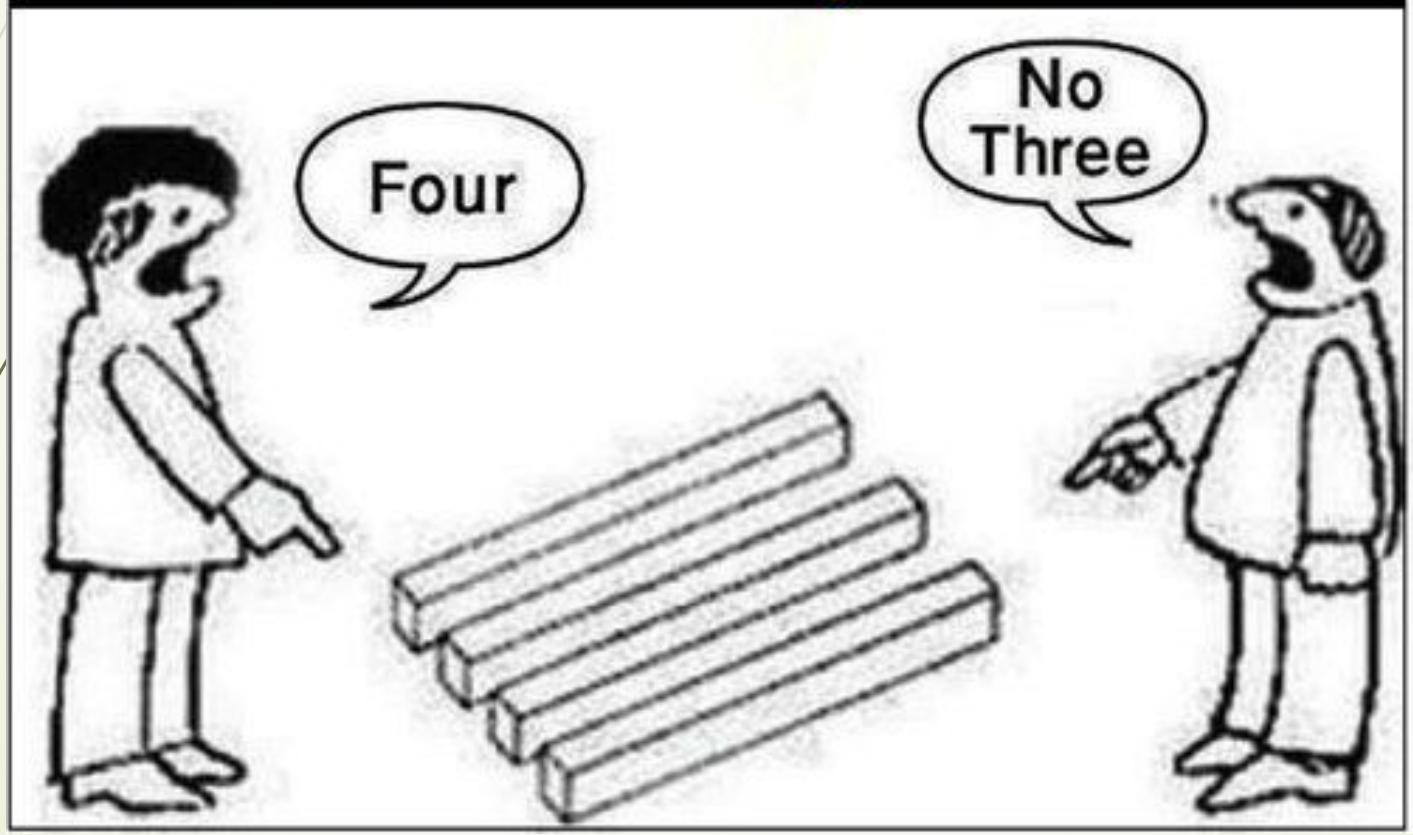
How our perceptions can lead to misunderstanding and conflict



What is perception?

- Process of giving meaning to sensory stimulus through organizing and interpreting.
- It is how we 'see' things.
- Perception is an individual's view of reality.
- It is highly subjective.
- Role of perceptions at work place?

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Basic elements of perception

- Selection and screening of information
- Organization of stimuli
- Sub-processes of perception
  - Stimulus
  - Registration
  - Interpretation
  - Feedback
  - Consequence (the response)

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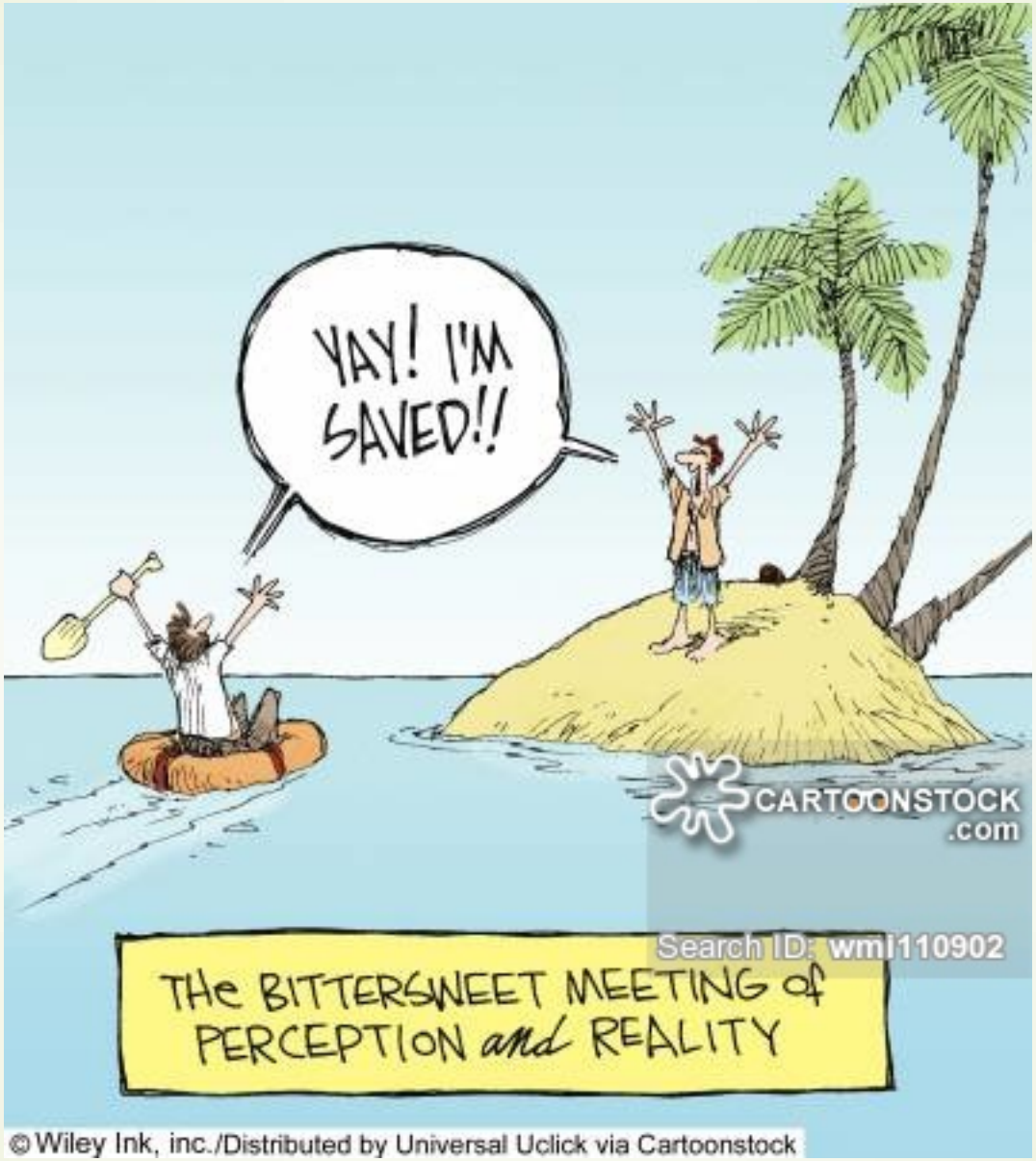
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THE BITTERSWEET MEETING of PERCEPTION and REALITY
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Principles of perceptual selection

- How we select the stimulus?
- External and internal factors.
- External factors
  - Intensity
  - Size
  - Contrast
  - Repetition
  - Motion
  - Novelty and familiarity

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Principles of perceptual selection

- Internal factors
  - Habit
  - Motivation and interest
  - Learning
  - Organizational role and specialization

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Perceptual organization

- Grouping
- Closure
- Figure-ground
- Perceptual constancy

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Perceptual grouping

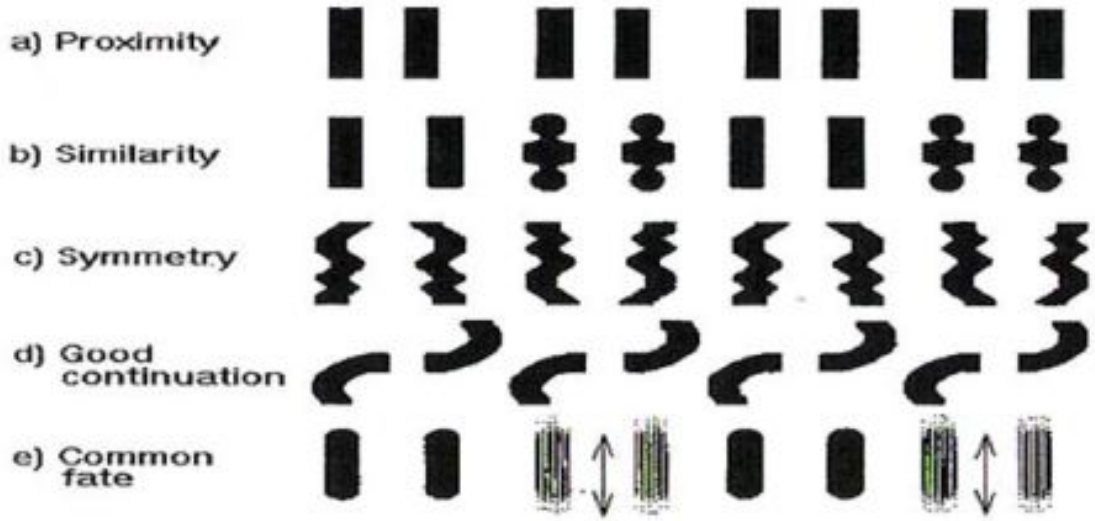
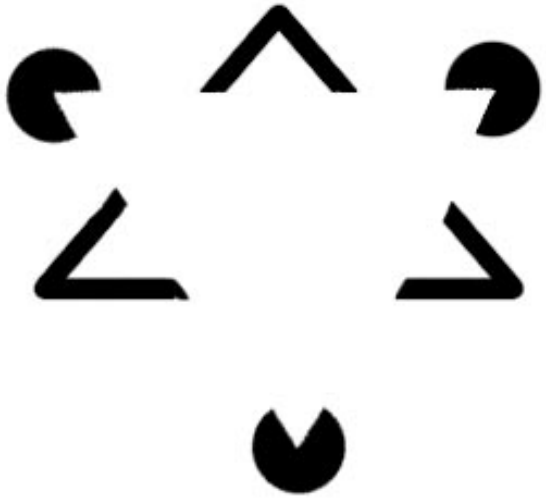


Figure 1.7. Gestalt grouping principles (taken from Shepard & Levitin, 2002, p.512).

Perceptual closure



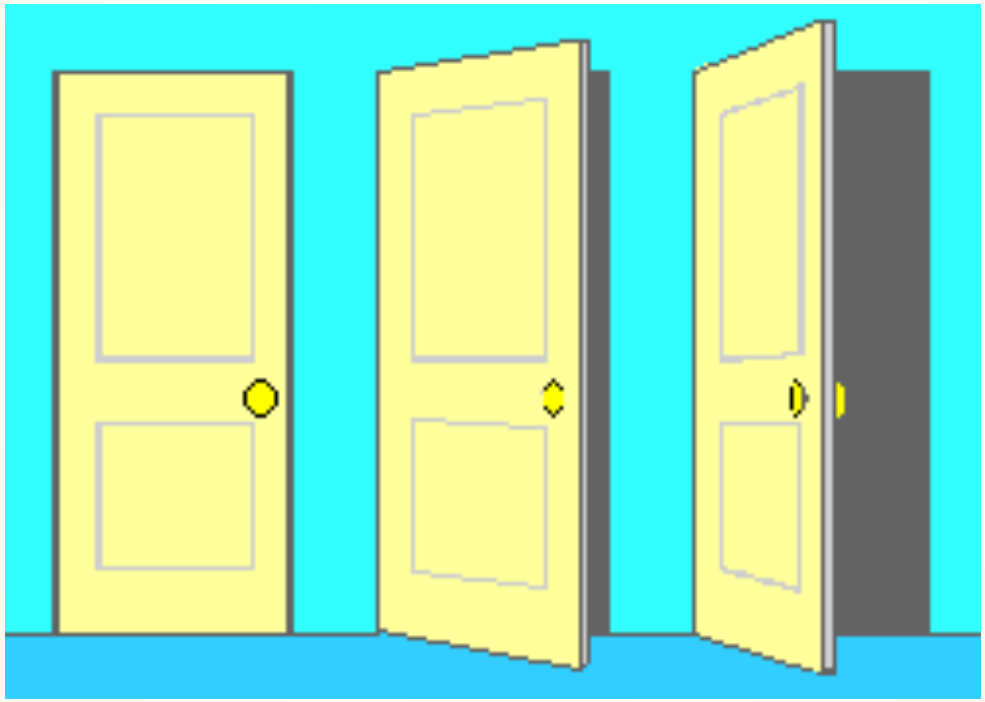
Law of Closure:

Objects grouped together are seen as a whole.

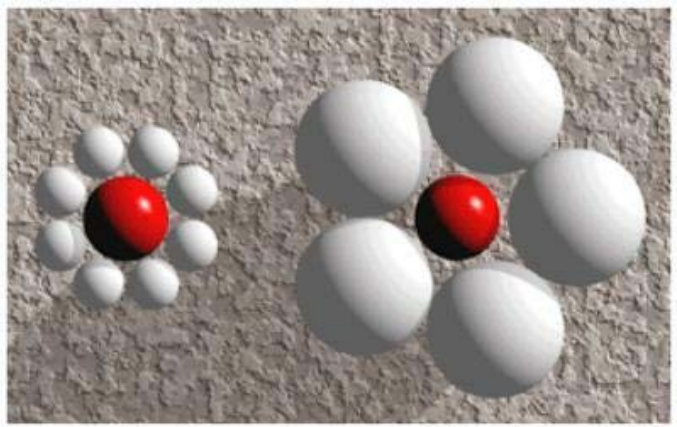
We tend to ignore gaps and complete contour lines. In the image above, there are no triangles or circles, but our minds fill in the missing information to create familiar shapes and images.

Figure-ground

Perceptual constancy



Optical illusions



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Social Perception

- The process of combining, integrating and interpreting information about others to gain an accurate understanding of them.
- Attribution: the process through which individuals attempt to determine the causes behind others' behaviour.

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Social Identity

- Personal identity: The characteristics that define a particular individual.
- Social identity: defining a person in the context of his/her membership in various social groups.
- Social identity theory: we perceive ourselves and others based on both our unique characteristics (personal identity) and our membership in various groups (social identity).

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The Attribution Process

- Internal Vs External causes
- Kelley's theory of causal attribution:
  - Consensus: the extent to which other people behave in the same manner as the person we are judging.
  - Consistency: how consistently the person exhibits the behaviour in similar context.
  - Distinctiveness: the extent to which a person behaves in the same manner in other contexts.

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Attribution of Cause

- Low Consensus, Low Distinctiveness, High Consistency = Personal Attribution
- High Consensus, High Distinctiveness, High Consistency = Stimulus Attribution
- High Consensus, Low Distinctiveness, Low Consistency = Circumstance Attribution

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Perceptual Biases in Social Perception

- Fundamental attribution error: the tendency to attribute other's action to internal causes while largely ignoring external factors.
- Halo effect: overall impressions of others affecting specific judgments.
- Team halo effect: the tendency for people to credit teams for their successes but not hold to them accountable for their failures.

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Perceptual Biases in Social Perception….

- Similar-to-me effect: perceiving people who are similar to us in positive light.
- Selective perception: the tendency to focus on some aspects of the environment while ignoring others.
- First-impression error

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Halo effect

Power of Perception

- Self-fulfilling prophecy
  - Pygmalion effect
  - Golem effect

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Job stereotypes

AFP

Stereotyping

- A belief that all members of specific groups share similar traits and are prone to behave the same way.
- Negative impact:
  - Selective perception
  - Bias and prejudice

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Some implications for HR

- Impression management techniques
- Bias and stereotyping during selection and appraisal

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Stethoscope

Sewing machine